



National Citizens Survey

Presentation of Results

Presenters

Mark Belton, County Administrator

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Introduction

**IS OUR COMMUNITY ONE WHERE
PEOPLE WANT TO LIVE *AND* WORK?**

- **The National Citizen Survey (NCS)** is an analytical report of the quality of life and government services in Charles County.
- **Great communities are partnerships.**
- **This is our second survey. The first was completed in 2016.**



How was the survey administered?

- Randomly selected residents received a mailed survey starting Sept. 21
- An online survey was then available to all residents starting Oct. 16
- The survey was promoted on the County's website, in news releases and e-newsletters, on county television, and on social media



How was the survey administered?

- 1,600 random “sampling” of households received a mailed survey which could be completed and returned, or completed online
 - *“Sampling” refers to the method by which households were chosen to take the mailed survey*
- All households within Charles County were eligible to participate in the online survey



Each selected household received three mailings:

1. Pre-notification postcard
2. Letter with the actual survey, and a postage-paid return envelope
3. Reminder letter with the survey and a postage-paid return envelope

Mailed Survey Responses

- 3% of the 1,600 mailed surveys were undeliverable
- 18% response rate for mailed surveys (279 respondents)
- 976 residents completed the online survey

Rates By Commissioner District

	Total Sample Used	Response Rate
District 1	337	23%
District 2	458	20%
District 3	370	16%
District 4	435	13%
Overall	1,600	18%

Confidence level with survey results = 95%

Location of Survey Recipients

Commissioner Districts



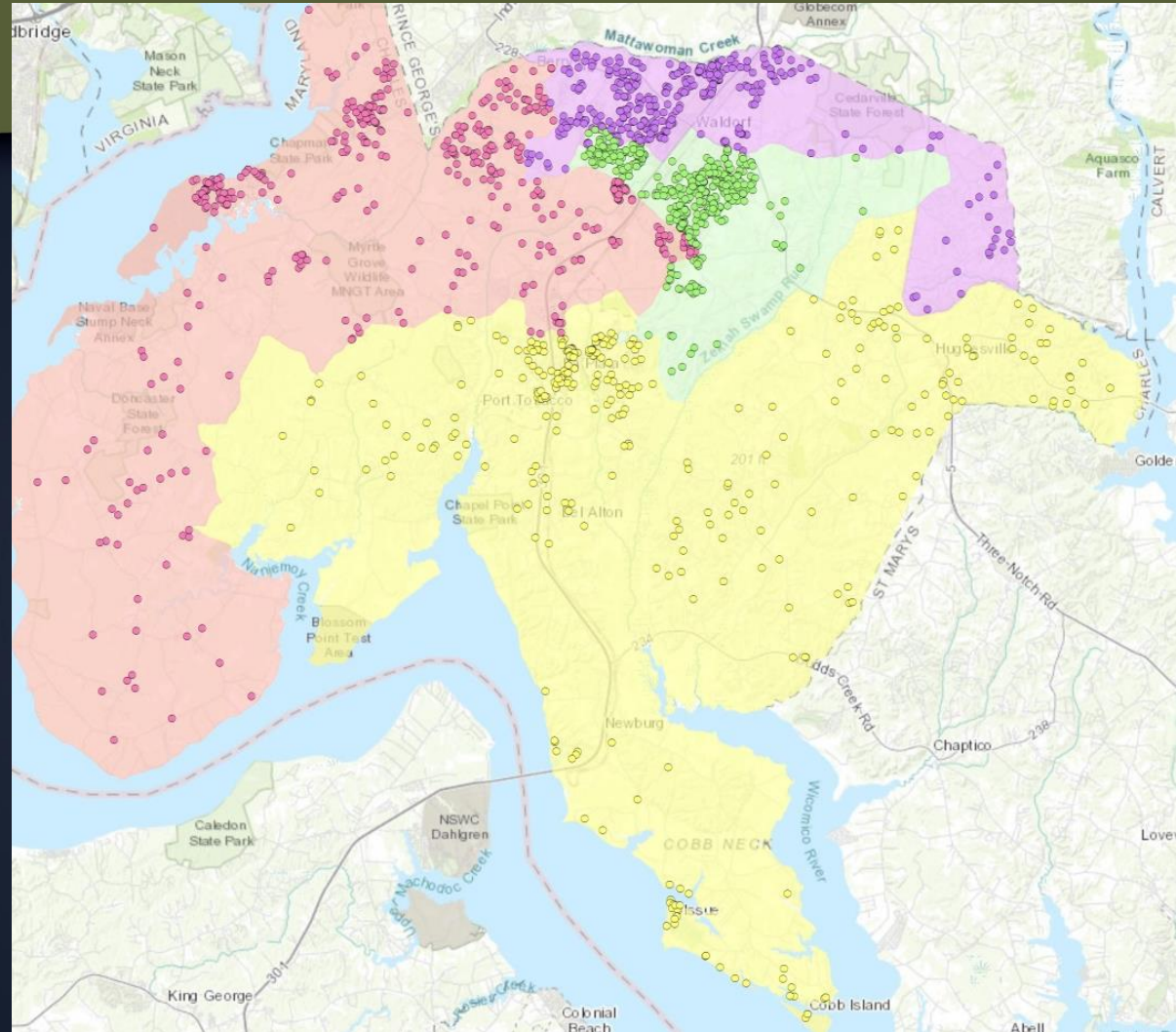
District 1

District 2



District 3

District 4



Of Our Respondents...

- 74% work full-time
- 63% have lived in Charles County more than 10 years
- 81% own their residence
- 55% are between the ages of 35 and 64
- 57% are White; 36% are Black or African-American; 5% are American Indian or Alaskan Native; 3% are Asian, Asian Indian, or Pacific Islander; 6% identify Other
- 62% are female, and 38% are male

The demographic characteristics of the survey were compared to the 2010 Census of Charles County, and the results were weighted.

The Three Pillars

The NCS captures residents' opinions within three community pillars.

Community Characteristics

What makes our community livable, attractive, and a place where people want to be?

Governance

How well does Charles County Government meet the needs and expectations of its residents?

Participation

Are Charles County residents connected to their community and each other?

The Three Pillars

For each community pillar, there are eight facets of livable communities.



The Three Pillars

NCS benchmarks Charles County's survey results against more than 500 other communities nationwide.

- We use NCS data to determine:
 - What are we doing well?
 - What can we do better?



Dashboard Summary

		Community Characteristics			Governance			Participation		
		Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower	Higher	Similar	Lower
	HIGHER									
	SIMILAR									
	LOWER									
	Overall	0	12	32	0	26	20	1	23	11
	General	0	1	6	0	3	0	0	2	1
	Safety	0	1	2	0	5	2	1	2	0
	Mobility	0	0	7	0	5	3	0	0	3
	Natural Environment	0	0	1	0	4	2	0	3	0
	Built Environment	0	2	3	0	5	2	0	2	0
	Economy	0	2	7	0	0	1	0	2	1
	Recreation and Wellness	0	5	1	0	2	2	0	4	1
	Education and Enrichment	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	2
	Community Engagement	0	0	3	0	1	7	0	9	2

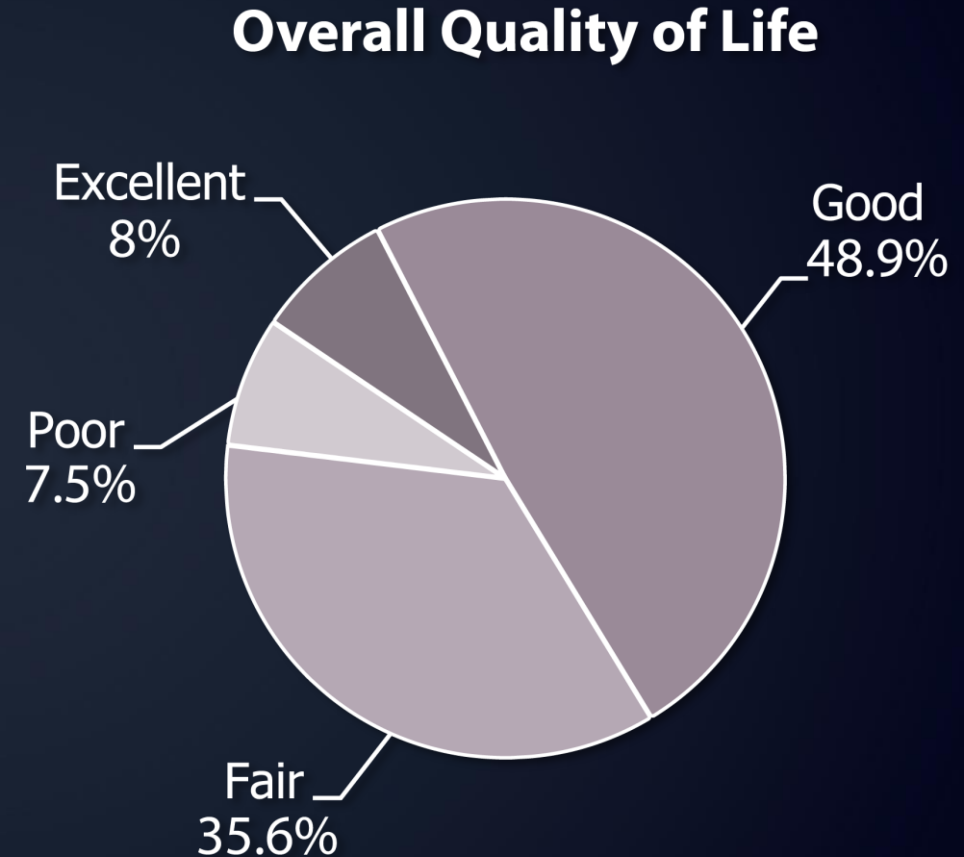
Summary

Survey results presented several takeaways to consider:

- 70% rated Charles County as an **excellent or good place to live** – 8 in 10 gave positive ratings to their neighborhood as a good place to live.
- **Safety is a key focus area** for the community.
- Residents identified **Cost of Living** and **Employment Opportunities** as priorities.
- Public trust ratings are mixed, but residents are **likely to recommend**, or remain in Charles County.

Quality of Life

- **Good indicator of overall community health.**
- **What are we doing well?**
 - 57% rated Charles County's quality of life as excellent or good.
- **What can we do better?**
 - Economy
 - Mobility
 - Education / Entertainment
 - Cultural / Arts / Music
 - Childcare / Preschool



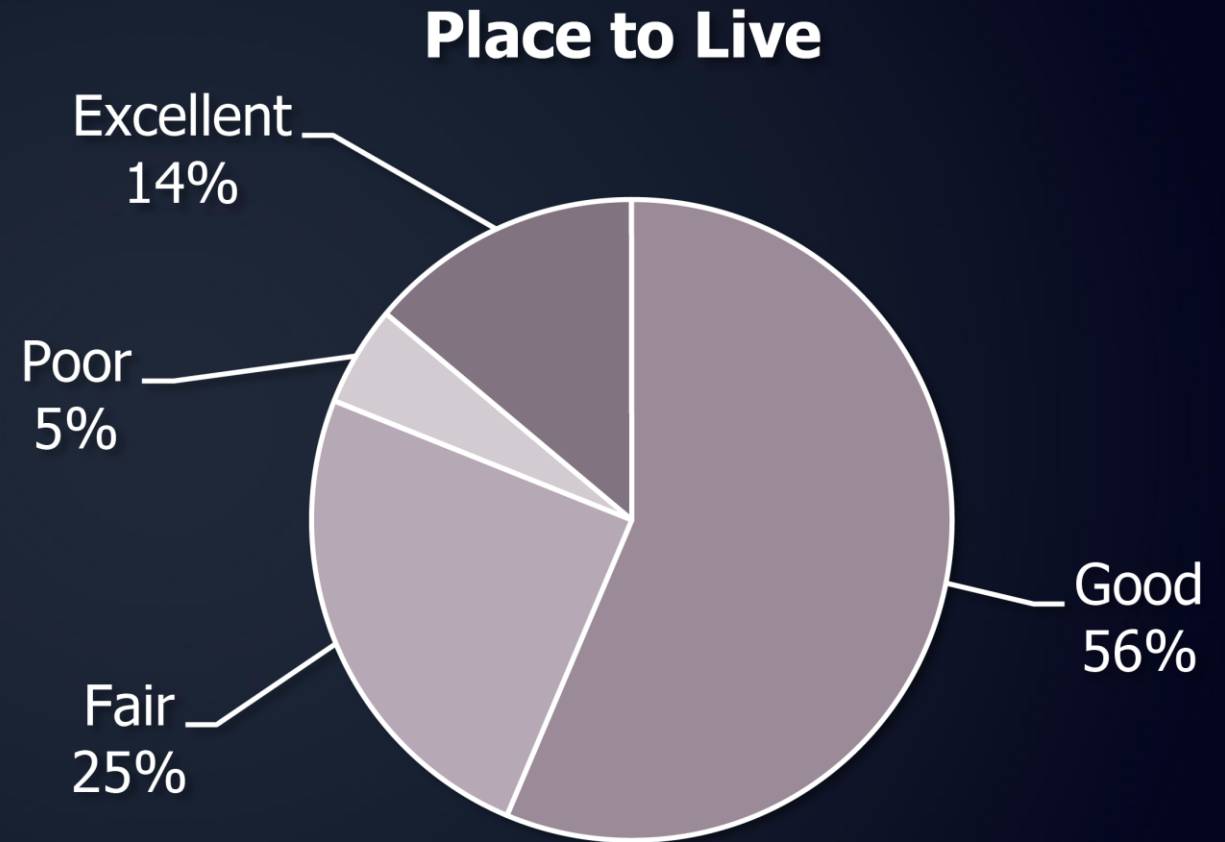
Pillar #1

Community

Characteristics

Community: What are we doing well?

**70% ranked
Charles County
as an excellent
or good place
to live.**



Community: What are we doing well?

Charles County ranked high (60% and above)

- ↑ Safe in neighborhoods and downtown/commercial area
- ↑ Health care and housing options
- ↑ Overall natural environment and air quality

Charles County was similar or higher to the national benchmark in all of these areas.



Community: What can we do better?

Charles County ranked low (40% or below):

- ↴ Ease of walking, and paths and walking trails
- ↴ Travel by bicycle, public transportation, and car
- ↴ Traffic flow
- ↴ New development
- ↴ Affordable, quality housing*
- ↴ Vibrant downtown/commercial area
- ↴ Places to retire (34% excellent/good)

**Charles County was lower than the national benchmark in all of these areas except affordable, quality housing.*



Community: What can we do better?

Charles County ranked low (40% or below):

- ↘ Cost of living
- ↘ Employment opportunities, places to work, and places to visit
- ↘ Opportunities participate in community matters
- ↗ Mental health care*
- ↘ Cultural arts/music activities
- ↘ Childcare/preschool
- ↘ Social events, neighborliness, and openness/acceptance

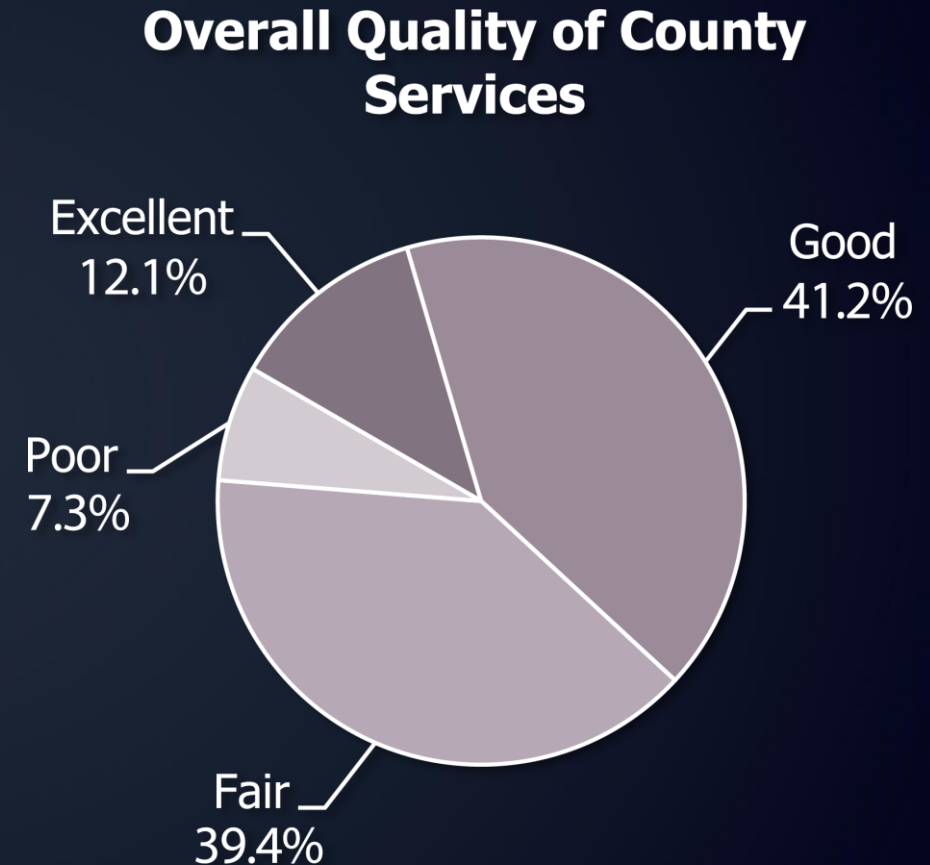
**Charles County was lower than the national benchmark in all of these areas except mental health.*

Pillar #2

Governance

Governance: What are we doing well?

- 53% ranked the overall quality of Charles County services as excellent or good.
- More than 80% gave high ratings to safety (*police, fire, rescue, etc.*)
- About 6 in 10 residents were pleased with the county's customer service.



Governance: What are we doing well?

Charles County ranked high (60% and above):

- ⬆️ Police, fire, ambulance/EMS, and fire prevention
- ⬆️ Drinking water
- ⬆️ Garbage collection, recycling, and yard waste pickup
- ⬆️ Sewer services, power utility, and utility billing

Charles County was similar to the national benchmark in all of these areas.



Governance: What can we do better?

Charles County ranked low (40% or below):

- ⬇ Land use, planning, and zoning
- ⬇ Code enforcement
- ⬇ Economic development
- ⬇ Street repair and lighting*
- ⬇ Natural areas, preservation, and open space
- ⬇ Sidewalk maintenance
- ⬇ Bus or transit services

** Charles County was lower than the national benchmark in all of these areas except street repair.*

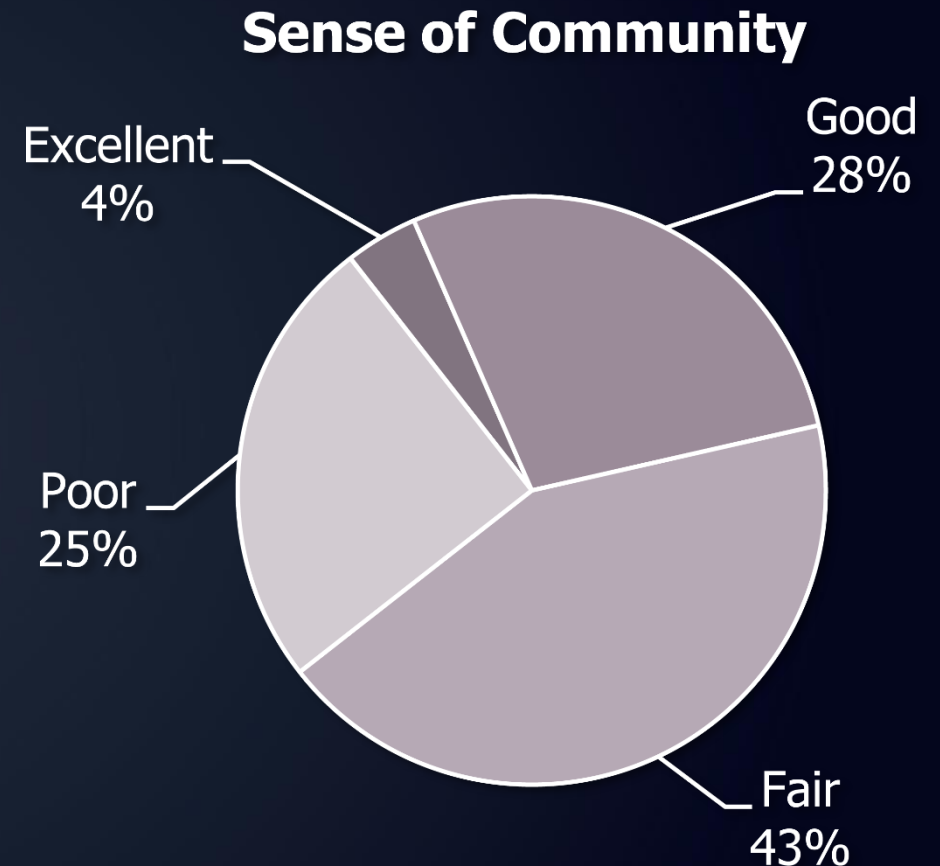
Pillar #3

Participation

Participation: What are we doing well?

Charles County ranked high (60% or above):

- 📌 75% ranked the overall sense of community in Charles County as fair, good, or excellent.
- 📌 More than 80% talked or visited with neighbors, purchased goods in Charles County, and voted in local elections
- 📌 6 in 10 would recommend living in Charles County.



Participation: What are we doing well?

Charles County ranked high (60% and above)

- ⬆ Did not report a crime and was not the victim of a crime
- ⬆ Did a favor for a neighbor
- ⬆ Conserved water, made home more energy efficient, and recycled

Charles County was similar to the national benchmark in all of these areas.



Participation: What are we doing well?

Charles County ranked high (60% and above)

- ⬆ Voted in local elections
- ⬆ Used Charles County public libraries
- ⬆ Visited a county park
- ⬆ Participated in moderate or vigorous physical activity
- ⬆ In very good to excellent health
- ⬆ Talked to or visited with neighbors
- ⬆ Did a favor for a neighbor
- ⬆ Read or watched local news
- ⬆ Ate five portions of fruits and vegetables

Charles County was similar to the national benchmark in all of these areas.

Participation: What can we do better?

Charles County ranked low (40% or below)

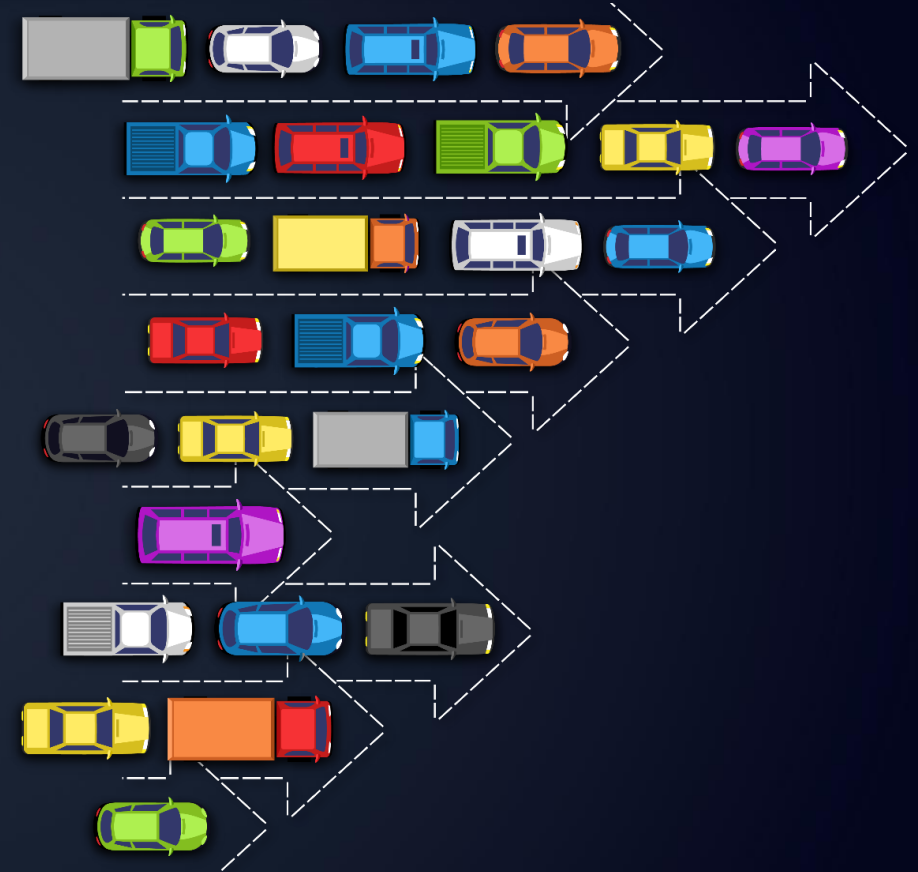
- ↳ Used public transportation instead of driving, carpooled, or walked/biked to work
- ↳ Work in Charles County
- ↳ Campaigned for an issue, cause or candidate
- ↳ Attended or watched a public meeting*
- ↳ Contacted a Charles County elected official*
- ↳ Believe economy will have a positive impact on income*

** Charles County was similar to the national benchmark in all of these areas.*

Custom Questions

Traffic Congestion

- Nearly all (94%) thought it was essential or very important to invest in road improvements.
- 54% rated bus transit as essential or very important.
- 51% rated rail transit as essential or very important.
- 66% rated investing in sidewalks and bike trails as essential or very important.



Sources of County Information

Receiving county government information is strongly or somewhat preferred using the following methods:

- 84% County Government Website
- 74% Email (e-newsletters)
- 69% Mobile Phone App (*being considered*)
- 68% Direct Mail
- 67% Social Media
- 44% County Government Television Station
- 34% Podcasts



Customer Service

The impression after interacting with County Government employees was rated from excellent to fair as follows:

88%	Friendly
85%	Knowledgeable
84%	Helpful

Overall impression
after interacting with
county staff was
84% positive



Special Topics

Tri-County Animal Shelter and Animal Control:

- Utilized in the last 12 months:
Yes = 48% • No = 52%

The top three are rated as essential/very important to have:

- 67% Foster program
- 62% Volunteer program
- 61% Well pet clinic



Special Topics

- Half of residents gave excellent or good ratings to the quality of services and programs for seniors (age 55+)



Summary of Survey Results

- Most Charles County residents enjoy a good quality of life.
- Mobility in the county is an area for improvement.
- Economic development in the county is an area for improvement.
- Public trust ratings are mixed, but residents are pleased with customer service.



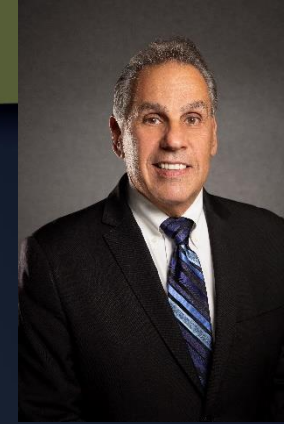
Next Steps

The Board of Commissioners, along with County Executive Leaders will gather for a progressive retreat in Feb. 2018.

Survey results will be presented with discussions on opportunities for improvement, plans of action, with a commitment to a better county experience for all.



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President



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Vice President & District 4



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Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
District 2



Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.
District 3

Conclusion

- Make improvements or maintain excellence in areas that support our desired identity.
- Not all indicators are a call to action.
- Consider our community's priorities.
- Different communities have different strengths and identities.





Charles County Government

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MD Relay Service: 7-1-1 (Relay TDD: 1-800-735-2258) • Equal Opportunity Employer

www.CharlesCountyMD.gov



About Charles County Government

The mission of Charles County Government is to provide our citizens the highest quality service possible in a timely, efficient and courteous manner. To achieve this goal, our government must be operated in an open and accessible atmosphere, be based on comprehensive long- and short-term planning and have an appropriate managerial organization tempered by fiscal responsibility. We support and encourage efforts to grow a diverse workplace. Charles County is a place where all people thrive and businesses grow and prosper; where the preservation of our heritage and environment is paramount; where government services to its citizens are provided at the highest level of excellence; and where the quality of life is the best in the nation.

It is the policy of Charles County to provide equal employment opportunity to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religious or political affiliation or opinion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other status protected by law.